

ACHiEVER





Dear Friend:

Every day, I am reminded anew of just how unique UMUC is as an institution of higher learning. From our innovative agreement with Hughes Communications in India to our new, cooperative scholarship program for graduates of Montgomery College, every day this university broadens its scope and sharpens its focus on the needs of adult students, in Maryland and around the world.

But nothing we achieve on the institutional level will ever overshadow the accomplishments of our remarkable students, alumni, and faculty. Without their hard work, persistence, and unwavering focus on their dreams, we would fail in our mission.

And so I am especially pleased and proud to introduce this issue of *Achiever*, which highlights a new series of stories about remarkable members of the UMUC family—their focus, their vision, their courage.

Inside, you'll read the story of one of UMUC's most distinguished alumni, General John W. Vessey Jr., whose long and illustrious military career—bolstered by his UMUC education—led him to the chairmanship of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. As a way of giving back, he established a UMUC scholarship fund for military personnel and dependents, and now, two recipients of that scholarship talk about what it meant to them to benefit from the General's generosity.

You'll meet Peggy Magee, clerk of the Circuit Court of Prince George's County, whose unwavering focus on securing a brighter future for herself and her young son led her first to the U.S. Air Force, then to UMUC, then to law school, and ultimately to public office in one of Maryland's largest counties.

Finally, you'll read the story of Jeanne Wohlford, whose MBA from UMUC served as the steppingstone from a 20-year career in nursing to a position in hospital administration, where she continues to serve patients by working constantly to maintain high standards of care while containing cost.

It's all in this issue of *Achiever*, along with the usual News Updates, Class Notes, and Faculty Kudos. I hope you enjoy it and, as always, I hope you'll share with us your own remarkable stories about UMUC.

Sincerely,

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The *Achiever* is published three times a year by Marketing and Communications at University of Maryland University College, Adelphi, Maryland. Call 240-582-2509 with your comments and suggestions, or send e-mail to ccassano@umuc.edu. University of Maryland University College subscribes to a policy of equal education and employment opportunities.

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BY CHIP CASSANO

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH AND CENTER, THIS PAGE, KATHERINE LAMBERT; BOTTOM RIGHT: MICHAEL SCHWARZ

GREGORY VON LEHMEN NAMED UMUC PROVOST AND CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

Gregory von Lehmen was appointed UMUC’s provost and chief academic officer in July 2009.

Von Lehmen has served UMUC in a variety of capacities since 2001, when he joined UMUC Asia as area director for Japan. After returning to the United States in 2005, he served as senior associate dean in the School of Undergraduate Studies, and later as senior vice provost for academic affairs, before assuming the responsibilities of acting provost and chief academic officer in September 2008. He was instrumental in UMUC’s successful rebid of the U.S. Department of Defense contract to provide face-to-face instruction to troops stationed in Asia, and his performance in the role of acting provost and chief academic officer helped cement his reputation as a leader of character, vision, and integrity.

Prior to his tenure at UMUC, von Lehmen taught constitutional and administrative law, political philosophy, and public administration for five years at Georgia Southwestern State University, where he was a tenured associate professor. He joined Troy University in 1990, serving initially as assistant professor of public administration in the university’s Master of Public Administration program in Europe, and teaching in Germany, Spain, England, Italy, Turkey, and Portugal. He returned to the United States to serve as regional director of University College Programs—



Gregory von Lehmen, UMUC’s Provost and Chief Academic Officer

Southwest, managing Troy’s programs at military and NASA facilities in the western United States. In 1997, he relocated to Okinawa, where until 2001 he oversaw Troy’s graduate programs in Japan, Korea, Guam, and Hawaii.

Von Lehmen holds a PhD in political science and an MPA from the University of Georgia, and a bachelor’s degree in economics from Northern Kentucky University.

MILITARY TIMES EDGE RANKS UMUC NO. 1 FOR MILITARY STUDENTS

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

Military Times EDGE has listed UMUC as the most popular college or university among active-duty servicemembers. UMUC’s unique partnerships, robust selection of online courses, campuses on three different continents (North America, Europe, and

Asia), and degrees designed to compliment military training were a few of the reasons cited by the publication for the first-place ranking. American Public University, Central Texas College, University of Phoenix, and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University rounded out the top five.

“UMUC was founded in 1947, in large part, to provide higher education opportunities to returning World War II servicemembers under the original GI Bill,” said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. “Given that history, we are especially pleased and honored to be the institution of choice among active-duty servicemembers. With more than 60 years of experience in serving the needs of military students, UMUC takes great pride in helping to bring a quality education within reach of our men and women in uniform, no matter where they are called to serve.”

UMUC currently educates an estimated 50,000 active-duty servicemembers, dependents and veterans

around the world each year. According to the publication, more than 645,000 active-duty servicemembers enrolled in the military’s voluntary education programs during fiscal year 2008, and of those, at least 450,000 took college-level courses.

Military Times EDGE is a publication dedicated to showing soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guard personnel the practical and positive actions that can make their lives and careers better—both in the military and beyond. To view the full report, visit www.militarytimesedge.com/education/degree-programs/ed_popularcolleges_072709.

UMUC TAKES GOLD IN THE 2009 DRAGON BOAT RACES

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC’s Virtual Dragons brought home three medals in the 2009 Dragon Boat Festival held May 16–17, 2009, on the





UMUC's Virtual Dragons concluded one of their best seasons ever by capturing two golds and a silver in the 2009 dragon boat races on the Potomac River.



Potomac River—a gold medal in the 500-meter mixed “E” finals, another gold in the 500-meter open “B” finals, and a silver in the 200-meter open “B” finals.

The three medals represent one of the best performances that the UMUC team has recorded since the university first competed in the event in 2002.

The tradition of racing dragon boats commemorates the death of Chu Yuan (475–221 B.C.), a poet and minister of state during the Chu Dynasty, who had protested against a corrupt government and was stripped of his office. He wandered about the countryside, unhappy and dejected. When local fishermen realized Chu had thrown himself into the river, they raced out in their boats to save him, beating drums to scare off the fish that they thought would eat the poet's body. They also dropped rice dumplings in the water as a sacrifice to his spirit and let the fish eat that instead of Chu's body. This scene is reenacted every year during dragon boat races worldwide.

For more about the annual dragon boat races in Washington, D.C., visit www.dragonboatdc.com.



JAY LIEBOWITZ JOINS UMUC AS ORKAND CHAIR OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

Jay Liebowitz joined UMUC, effective August 31, 2009, as the Orkand Chair of Management and Technology in the Graduate School of Management and Technology. In his new role, Liebowitz will work to establish UMUC as an international center of excellence and research in management, technology management, teaching, and distance education. Liebowitz came to UMUC from the Carey Business School at Johns Hopkins University, where he held the rank of professor and served as the founding program director for the graduate certificate in Competitive Intelligence. The Orkand Chair was endowed by Donald S. Orkand, founder of the Orkand

Corporation and chair of UMUC's Board of Visitors.

“We are honored to welcome Dr. Liebowitz to UMUC and believe his extensive experience and background is the perfect combination for the Orkand Chair of Management and Technology,” said Michael S. Frank, vice provost and dean of UMUC's Graduate School of Management and Technology. “UMUC is dedicated to providing its students—locally and abroad—with high-quality programs, led by industry trend-setters and innovators



Jay Liebowitz

who are equipped to provide an outstanding education marked by current and relevant content that is in demand in today's competitive job market.”

Prior to joining Johns Hopkins University, Liebowitz was the first knowledge management officer at NASA Goddard Space Flight Center. In addition, he was the Robert W. Deutsch Distinguished Professor of Information Systems at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, professor of management science at George Washington University, and chair of artificial intelligence at the U.S. Army War College.

Liebowitz is the founder and editor-in-chief of *Expert System With Applications: An International Journal* that produced nearly 1,600 paper downloads per day worldwide last year. Additionally, he is a Fulbright Scholar, IEEE-USA Federal Communications Commission executive fellow, and was recently ranked as one of the top-10 knowledge management researchers/practitioners out of 11,000 worldwide.

Throughout his career, Liebowitz has published more than 40 books, including his most recent, *Knowledge Management in Public Health* (CRC, 2010), and a myriad of journal articles on knowledge management, intelligent systems, and information technology management. He received his DSc in systems analysis and management/operations research, his MBA, and his Bachelor of Business Administration from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

UMUC PARTNERS WITH HUGHES COMMUNICATIONS, OFFERS GLOBAL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATE IN INDIA

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC has partnered with Hughes Communications India Ltd. to bring a graduate certificate in Global Business Management to qualified students in India. The program uses Hughes Communications’ sophisticated communication technologies to deliver online instruction that is designed to prepare students to serve as mid-level managers in a global enterprise, to make sound financial decisions, and to effectively manage team members from different countries and cultures and in different locations.

This pioneering program has been designed with the rapidly changing global economic and business landscape in mind and responds to the worldwide demand for managers with international business expertise. It is suited to the needs of managers already working in global organizations, to entrepreneurs who must fill multiple roles in their own companies, or to mid-level employees who wish to move into management positions or into a different market sector.

“We are pleased and proud to partner with Hughes Communications India Ltd. to provide global insights and business perspectives to Indian students through our online Global Business



Management graduate certificate program,” said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. “The program is designed to attract the best and brightest working professionals and graduates in India who are keen to upgrade their knowledge quotient and position themselves to compete in the global marketplace.”

“With the changing face of the Indian economy over the last few years, there is an increasing need to obtain, improve, and enhance the in-depth knowledge in business administration to match global standards,” said Partho Banerjee, president of Hughes Communications India Ltd. “Our association with University of Maryland University College is yet another step to provide quality global education to working professionals and graduates across India.”

He added, “UMUC enjoys a worldwide reputation as an award-winning leader in online learning and higher education, and our partnership with this premier institution is an endeavor to provide the relevant academic edge to Indian students through a comprehensive curriculum that will empower them take on the challenges they face at work.”

UMUC PARTNERS WITH MONTGOMERY COLLEGE TO CREATE THE DR. EVELYN BATA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC has created an academic pilot program with Montgomery College, made possible by a gift from Evelyn Bata, a member of the Board of Visitors and UMUC faculty. Beginning this fall, selected Montgomery College students who wish to pursue a bachelor’s degree at UMUC will receive generous scholarship



Evelyn Bata serves on UMUC’s faculty and Board of Visitors

support to cover tuition as well as academic services from a resource advisor who will assist them in transitioning to a four-year program at UMUC.

“We are deeply grateful for this generous gift from Dr. Evelyn Bata, and we are equally proud to offer such a remarkable opportunity to Montgomery College graduates through this innovative program,” said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. “Many students who transfer to UMUC after graduating from a community college need focused assistance in the area of academic support, and this generous contribution promises to help us provide that support—along with significant tuition assistance—in a program tailored specifically to the needs of these students.”

With a generous commitment of \$250,000 over three years, UMUC will provide qualified students with services designed to help them be successful in their chosen academic programs at UMUC. Eligible students must have demonstrated academic potential while at Montgomery College and have completed at least 40 credits. Preference will be given to those enrolled in high-demand disciplines such as information technology, homeland security, accounting, and other identified fields of study.

In addition to financial support, the new scholarship program for student success will provide direct services at UMUC through a resource advisor. A portion of the gift is designated for an advisor, who will provide important regular contact with students at key checkpoints throughout their transition from Montgomery College, beginning with registration and arranging for student support services, such

as mentoring and tutoring. Additional funds will be used to cover textbooks and other supplies.

UMUC RECEIVES ACE/WAL-MART GRANT

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC received a \$100,000 grant as part of the Ameri-

can Council for Education (ACE)/Wal-Mart Success for Veterans Institutional Award. UMUC was one of 20 colleges and universities to receive the \$100,000 grant, which will support efforts to create online veteran-specific orientation programs, expand on-campus veterans service centers, enhance prospective student outreach efforts, and strengthen other veteran services.

“Given UMUC’s 60-year commitment to serving military students, we are especially pleased and proud to receive this grant, which will allow us to better serve those who serve our country,” said John Jones, UMUC’s vice president for Department of Defense relations. “The support from the Wal-Mart Foundation is greatly appreciated, and we look forward to collaborating with ACE to

better assist our veterans as they pursue their education goals.”

At UMUC, the grant will fund the development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of a veterans service model that will integrate comprehensive academic services into a Web-based platform. The goal of the new system will be to make it easier for veterans to make the transition

continued on page 27

UMUC FACULTY OPPORTUNITIES

JOIN A FACULTY COMMITTED TO HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED.

As a University of Maryland University College (UMUC) faculty member, you’ll help prepare mature, motivated students to become tomorrow’s leaders. Teaching at UMUC has a variety of advantages, including

- A teaching career that fits into your professional life
- State-of-the-art instructional technologies
- Comprehensive training and support
- Access to many state of Maryland benefits, such as medical, prescription and dental plans

Part-time positions are available in accounting, finance, marketing, strategic management, project management, IT-related disciplines, and more.

EOE/F/MC/V. Women and minority applicants are strongly encouraged to apply.



To learn more and apply, visit umuc.edu/facultyrecruit







SERVICE ABOVE SELF

PEGGY MAGEE,
Clerk of the Circuit
Court of Prince
George's County,
retired after 20 years
of service to her
country—and
immediately began
a second career,
serving the residents
of Prince George's
County, Maryland.
This is her story.

BY CHIP CASSANO

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P

eggy Magee, Clerk of the Circuit Court of Prince George’s County, needed just one night in a UMUC classroom to determine which path her civilian career would follow. Up to that point, she had been focused only on earning her degree, but when she signed up for a course in paralegal studies, everything changed.

“I think it was a class in legal ethics, and after that first night, I knew that I wanted to be a lawyer,” Magee said.

It wasn’t the first time she had been faced with a decision that would prove pivotal in the course of her life—and it wasn’t the first time that her decisiveness would pay off. More than a decade earlier, in 1976, as a single mother from the tiny town of Biloxi, Mississippi, Magee enlisted in the U.S. Air Force, determined to secure a brighter future for herself and her son.

Back then, it hadn’t taken her long, either, to realize that she had found her niche. On Lackland Air Force Base, just outside of San Antonio, Texas, she joined thousands of new Air Force recruits who converged on the base from around the country, ready to tackle basic training. As they stood in formation, saluting, then marched off to their different squadrons, everything felt right—the order, the discipline, the opportunity.

“I knew right then that I was going to do 20 years in the Air Force,” said Magee.

She started in teletype maintenance—personal computers were still in their infancy—and advanced steadily, becoming a communications crypto maintenance specialist, working with encoded

“But it was really just a matter of determination to get out there and let people know who I am, and about my record and my willingness to serve.”



equipment and breaking new ground as one of the first women to enter the field.

She knew that an education would be key to continued success, and she began working toward an associate’s degree through the Community College of the Air Force. That focus eventually led her to UMUC and, in 1985, while working for NATO and stationed in Turkey, she enrolled in her first course at the university. Thanks to UMUC’s global network of classrooms, Magee was able to continue her studies even after she relocated to Korea in 1988 and again when she returned to the United States in 1989.

Stateside, stationed at Andrews Air Force Base, she worked on the communications gear on Air Force One and became the



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first woman to be named a first sergeant in the Presidential Airlift Group squadrons and Special Air Mission squadrons. It was a rewarding career and a satisfying one, but—with retirement looming—Magee knew better than to rest on her laurels.

“They don’t have first sergeants in the civilian world. I needed a degree,” said Magee.

To Law School and Beyond

Then came the fateful night when she sat down in her first legal studies class at UMUC. In typical no-nonsense fashion, Magee quickly scheduled an appointment with a UMUC advisor and explained what she hoped to do—finish her bachelor’s degree

before her 20-year career with the military was over and start attending law school immediately. It was an ambitious plan, but her advisor recognized her determination and helped her map out a strategy.

“I was still on active duty, working all day as a first sergeant, sometimes 12 or 14 hours a day, and going to school at night. In May 1993, though, I did it—I graduated from UMUC with my bachelor’s degree in paralegal studies, and that September I enrolled in Catholic University’s Columbus School of Law.”

Peggy Magee is the architect of an innovative program for young people in Prince George’s County, introducing them to the circuit court system and helping them develop everything from public speaking to research skills.



Peggy Magee with Chief Deputy Deborah Cooke at the Prince George's County Court House

It wasn't easy—but Magee had never asked for it to be easy. She retired from the military with 20 years of service in 1996, graduated from law school in 1997, passed the Maryland bar that same year, and signed on as a law clerk to the Honorable G. R. Hovey Johnson in the 7th Circuit Court of Prince George's County, Maryland. One year later, she was hired as assistant state's attorney, serving as a prosecutor for the county.

For many, that would have represented a lifetime's worth of accomplishments, but Magee was only getting started.

She prosecuted cases in the district and juvenile courts until 2002, and then—when the state's attorney ran for and won the post of Prince George's County executive—Magee accepted a job as his special assistant. Two years later, she approached him to ask if she could head up her own agency and, soon after, won confirmation by the county council to serve as executive director of the Human Relations Commission, where she and her staff handled civil rights and EEOC cases.

In the meantime, Magee had earned her public manager's certification from George Washington University and, with her credentials in place and experience on her side, she was ready when—in May 2006—she learned that the current Clerk of the Circuit Court for Prince George's County wasn't planning to seek reelection.

For the first time, Magee declared her candidacy for public office.

"It was a county-wide race, so I had to cover all the different districts, and that was quite a challenge," said Magee.

It wasn't easy—but Magee had never asked for it to be easy. She retired from the military with 20 years of service in 1996, graduated from law school in 1997, passed the Maryland bar that same year, and signed on as a law clerk to the Honorable G. R. Hovey Johnson in the 7th Circuit Court of Prince George's County, Maryland. One year later, she was hired as assistant state's attorney, serving as a prosecutor for the county.

County, which maintains all the county records, Magee oversees a staff of 180 employees, responsible for everything from issuing marriage licenses to renewing business licenses, from processing notary and passport applications to handling property records, maintaining records in child support and paternity cases, and cataloging files and evidence—as well as summonses and subpoenas—on felony cases, juvenile cases, and more. On top of that, she handles swearing in the county executive, county council members, judges, police officers, sheriffs, firefighters, mayors, city council members, and correctional officers.

It is a vital job and a daunting one, but Magee sees public service as her calling, and she approaches every day as both a challenge and a responsibility.

"I'm a Rotarian, and the slogan for the Rotary Club is 'Service Above Self,'" said Magee. "I love that, because that's what my life is all about—service above self. I tell people, 'You know, I'm retired; I could move back to Mississippi with my mother on the coast down there in Biloxi and fish and cook gumbo and just chill and read, but I don't believe that that's what I'm supposed to do. I believe I'm supposed to give back and help others.'"

That is a philosophy that informs all facets of Magee's life, both personal and professional, and it comes as no surprise that she is the architect of an innovative internship program for young residents of Prince George's County that introduces them to the circuit court system and helps them develop everything from public speaking to writing and research skills. It also explains why, in 2005, when Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, Magee bought a 29-foot RV and, together with

"But it was really just a matter of having the determination to get out there and let people know who I am, and about my record and my willingness to serve."

For Magee, determination was never in short supply, and the voters in Prince George's County must have liked what they heard. Magee won the election with a 10,000-vote cushion.

The Public Servant

As head of the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Prince George's

“You know, I’m retired; I could move back to Mississippi with my mother on the coast down there in Biloxi and fish and cook gumbo and just chill and read, but I don’t believe that that’s what I’m supposed to do.

I believe I’m supposed to give back and help others.”

her mother (who had been visiting Magee in Maryland), drove south to survey the devastation. Her mother’s home had been destroyed, and Magee and her mother worked side-by-side to help clear the wreckage from her mother’s and neighbor’s properties.

“It was a lot of damage,” said Magee, “but it brought a lot of people together, and ultimately it just gives you more strength and more determination to serve once again, and to do what you have to do.”

For Magee, that means that full retirement—and a return to peaceful small-town life in Mississippi—may still be a long way off. In 2010, if the current state’s attorney decides to move on, Magee reports that she will run for the vacant position. And in the meantime, she has also agreed to “come back to school” to teach in UMUC’s criminal justice program.

“I will always see myself as a leader, someone who puts the best interests of the people of this county at the forefront,” said Magee. “So whatever position I end up in—whether I’m state’s attorney, or county executive, or congressperson, or even if I become a full-time professor at UMUC—as long as I have strength and breath, that’s what I’ll try to do.” ❖

TOP: First Sergeant Peggy Magee in the United States Air Force. CENTER: First Sergeant Peggy Magee and Commander Duane Jones aboard a Special Air Mission Aircraft. BOTTOM: Honorable Peggy Magee administering the Oath of Office to the University of Maryland Campus Police Officers.



FROM BEDSIDE TO



Armed with an MBA from UMUC, nursing veteran Jeanne Wohlford continues to care for patients by fighting to manage costs while keeping hospital standards high.

BY ALLAN ZACKOWITZ

BUSINESS PLANS



In Washington, D.C., politicians and lobbyists continue to wrangle over health care reform and all its thorny problems—rising costs, uninsured citizens, the uneven distribution of medical resources, and more. But on a smaller scale, in hospitals across the United States, health care professionals have been confronting those very problems for years, and a new breed of hospital administrator is working every day at the local level to assure that medical care is available to all who need it.

UMUC graduate Jeanne Wohlford—director of cardiovascular and pulmonary services at University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville, Tennessee—is one of those administrators.

“The American public expects to receive high-quality, high-technology health care in a safe environment, when they want or need that care,” said Wohlford. “Unfortunately, that comes at a cost. It is difficult to make health care more affordable when you consider the costs of staffing, supplies, medications, technology advancements, facilities maintenance, and information systems.”

Nonetheless, making health care more affordable is a central component of her job and a constant source of challenges—challenges that Wohlford is well-equipped to address.

Back to School

When Wohlford earned her two-year nursing degree from the Roanoke Memorial School of Nursing in 1981, she thought that she had been inside her last classroom. In nursing, it wasn't uncommon to advance into management based on clinical skills, expertise, and seniority. But after working for almost 20 years in the clinical environment and as a frontline manager, Wohlford ran into a roadblock.

“I believed I wouldn't have to go back to school to land the job I wanted because I was very good clinically and had proven myself as a frontline manager,” Wohlford said. “My perspective changed when I applied for a management position at another facility. It was a position I really wanted, but in order to be eligible, I needed to have a plan for completing my bachelor's degree. I realized that I couldn't avoid going back to school if I wanted to advance my career.”

She wanted to be able to teach, too, and that provided another motivating factor. Although she had already been working with a local college to develop the curriculum for a program in ultrasound technology, she learned that she would need a bachelor's degree at minimum before she would be allowed to teach—despite having the expertise to design the coursework.

“Teaching is something I really enjoy, and I wanted to be able to teach at the college level,” she added.

So Wohlford returned to school—and never looked back. Once she got in the classroom again, she knew she would go on to earn her master's degree, too.

“I loved learning and having my mind opened to new ideas and information,” she said. “It was like a light bulb coming on in my head. As soon as I began taking classes again, I understood why education is so important. I couldn't deny that it was the right thing to do.”

Wohlford completed her Bachelor of Science in nursing from the College of Health Sciences in Roanoke in 2000 and soon



As director of cardiovascular and pulmonary services, Jeanne Wohlford still cares for patients, but in a different capacity.

enrolled in graduate classes at UMUC. She struggled with her choice of graduate programs at first, wavering between UMUC's Master of Science in health care administration and its Master of Business Administration. She finally decided that the MBA would give her more career flexibility.

“I learned about UMUC through a co-worker who was also looking at graduate programs,” said Wohlford. “What I liked most was the option of taking courses online. I was not in a position to give up my day job, and I needed the flexibility an online program could offer.” She also appreciated being able to apply the material she was studying in class to her real life work.

“I recall writing a business proposal for a leadership development program,” said Wohlford. “I later shared that proposal with upper management where I worked and found myself on a leadership development team that taught classes to up-and-coming leaders.”

She graduated in 2004 and has never questioned her decision to return to school.

“Earning my master's degree was an essential part of advancing beyond frontline management,” said Wohlford. “I believe it was the best thing I have done to put myself in position to take on more challenges and opportunities. One UMUC professor told us that the MBA program was designed to help us formulate our own ideas. For some reason, that has stuck with me, giving me confidence in many of the decisions I have had to make.”

Getting Down to Business

That confidence in her own decision-making skills has been especially important as her responsibilities have changed and she has made the transition from nursing to management.

“Over time, I found myself doing less clinical work and more operational and human resource management,” she said. “While I liked doing clinical work, I found that I really enjoyed the challenges of managing in the health care environment.”

“One UMUC professor told us that the MBA program was designed to help us formulate our own ideas. For some reason, that has stuck with me, giving me confidence in many of the decisions I have had to make.”



While politicians argue over health care, administrators like Jeanne Wohlford fight to make high-tech healthcare affordable.

She held nursing and management positions in several Virginia hospitals before moving to Knoxville in 2005 to become health service line leader for Cardiovascular Services at St. Mary's Health System. In April 2008, she accepted her current position with the University of Tennessee Medical Center.

Having expertise in both nursing and business administration offers significant advantages. The clinical knowledge helps in understanding the needs of executive leaders, physicians, managers, and vendors, while the business background allows her to make more informed business decisions and negotiate contracts more effectively. Managing the supply chain allows her to improve the hospital's bottom line, which ultimately leads to more capital resources.

“It's a misconception that hospitals make lots of money,” Wohlford said. “A number operate in the red and don't have money for capital improvements, yet the drive to improve the level of patient services and safety takes constant resources. When resources are well managed, we do not have to face the tough decisions about which services we continue to offer and which ones we don't.”

Many hospitals also have a process for evaluating a patient's economic status and adjusting the cost of care when appropriate, and doctors, pharmaceutical companies, and medical equipment manufacturers often have their own programs to help reduce costs for patients with fewer economic resources. Community programs can also help offset expenses.

“Hospital administrators must be aware of the different programs for patients,” Wohlford said, “whether they involve charitable funds, financial counselors who are willing to work with patients, hospital vendors who donate items, or the hospital's own in-house programs. I believe that everyone should have access to affordable health care, but how we achieve that is a challenge.”

Growth and Change

It comes as no surprise, then, that Wohlford foresees no decline in the demand in health care for managers with expertise in business administration, and she pointed to the growth of electronic record-keeping—with \$19 billion of federal stimulus funds earmarked to foster universal adoption of electronic medical records—as another area with a growing demand for individuals with training and credentials from programs like UMUC's Master of Science in health administration informatics.

“You don't need to have a clinical background to go into that field of study,” Wohlford observed. “And as the president pushes for more integration of electronic health information, we expect to see many opportunities for the expansion of health informatics.”

In the meantime—and regardless of which way the political winds blow in Washington—Wohlford will continue to face the financial challenges involved in helping the department of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Services at University of Tennessee Medical Center continue to provide patients with top-level care.

Said Wohlford, when she first accepted the position, “I feel like my career path has been leading me to this destination, and I am excited about putting my skills and knowledge to work as we continue to move forward.” ❖

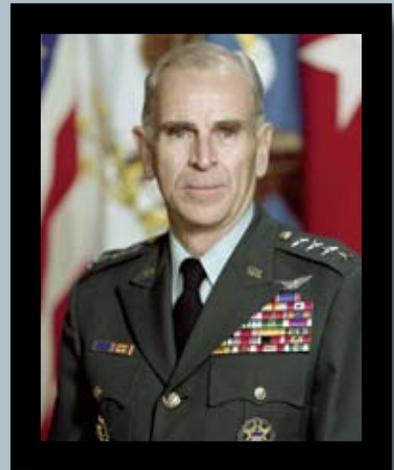


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Debts of Gratitude

The General John W. Vessey Jr. Scholarship Fund stands as a monument to a remarkable life of service and continues a legacy in the lives of the students whose dreams it helps support.

BY CHIP CASSANO



**Vessey Scholarship
recipient Orasa
"Shirley" Patterson**

When General John W. Vessey Jr., U.S. Army (Ret.), established the General John W. Vessey Jr. Scholarship Fund at University of Maryland University College, he did so as a way of repaying a debt that began to accrue 70 years ago, in 1939, when Vessey joined the Minnesota National Guard. He was only 16 years old, but he was embarking on what would be one of the military's longest and most illustrious careers—a career that would eventually lead him to the chairmanship of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff under President Ronald Reagan.

“ I got an awful lot of help from UMUC and from the education that I got there.

So that was a motivating factor in my decision to establish a scholarship fund.

I wanted to repay some of the help that I got

both from the university and from the armed forces.”

“I spent 46 years in the armed forces of the United States,” said Vessey, who first enrolled at UMUC in Korea in 1958, graduating in 1963 with a bachelor’s degree in military science. “I have a great affection for the men and women who serve, and I got an awful lot of help from UMUC and from the education that I got there. So that was a motivating factor in my decision to establish a scholarship fund. I wanted to repay some of the help that I got both from the university and from the armed forces.”

The fund awards scholarships to degree-seeking students of UMUC’s School of Undergraduate Studies, with preference given to recent Purple Heart recipients, active duty military personnel and members of their immediate families, military personnel who are currently transitioning to civilian life, and students with demonstrated financial need.

It was natural for Vessey to choose UMUC to administer the fund, given its long history of service to the military, and Vessey—who had attended several schools before enrolling at UMUC—knew firsthand the quality of UMUC’s programs, faculty, and student body.

“I remember enrolling in a philosophy course [at a traditional university stateside],” said Vessey. “It was one of the most interesting I ever took, because I was associated with young people, half of whom seemed to be serious about studying philosophy and half of whom were just riding the wave, hoping to earn a passing grade and move on to something that interested them more. It was a sharp contrast for me to be associated with them—at their age, I had been battling German and Italian troops in North Africa—but it was fun.”

It also added to his deep appreciation for the discipline and hard work he had come to expect from his UMUC classmates—who no doubt understood better the importance and value of a college education—and the no-nonsense approach of its professors.

“You have to remember that the army that I joined was drawn from a population where only 24 percent of the people had a high school education or better, and only 140,000—out of a population of close to 130 million—held a college degree,” said Vessey. He went on to point out that by 1949, thanks to the GI Bill, the number of college graduates had tripled, and the country was benefiting from the contributions of hundreds of thousands of new doctors, lawyers, engineers, and scientists.

“It’s a huge benefit to the armed forc-

es to have well-educated soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, and it’s a huge benefit to society, as well,” said Vessey.

In fact, Vessey said that he has tried to pattern his own life after a lecture by Nicholas Murray Butler—entitled “Five Evidences of an Education”—that Vessey first heard discussed in a UMUC classroom. The lecture praised the correct use of language, refined and gentle dealings with fellow human beings, the power and habit of reflection, the power to grow, and the power to act with efficiency and effectiveness.

He added, “In the waning years of my ninth decade on this earth, nearly every day I learn of something that somebody knows that I ought to know but I don’t, or of something that we human beings ought to know that nobody knows—all of which emphasizes the value of and need for continuing education throughout our lifetimes. So I’ve tried to fit my life around Butler’s five evidences, and I think most educated people do as well.”

When asked if he had any advice for the scholarship recipients, Vessey was predictably clear and concise: “Pursue the education,” he said simply. “Don’t quit.”

After a pause, he continued. “It’s been remarkable to watch UMUC march off into the deserts of Kuwait and Iraq, to Korea, all over Europe, Japan, Okinawa, the Philippines, and Vietnam. It’s just a wonderful story, and I think it’s great that spouses and dependents can take advantage of this scholarship, too, because as long as they’re connected with the military, they’ll be moving around the world, and wherever they go, UMUC will be there.”

Orasa “Shirley” Patterson

For Orasa “Shirley” Patterson—whose husband is stationed at Ft. Lewis in Washington State—receiving the General John W. Vessey Jr. Scholarship was more than a financial boost. It was the motivation she needed to keep moving toward her goal of earning a bachelor’s degree in accounting and of eventually becoming a CPA.

“I submitted the general scholarship application at the beginning of the year, but I’d never qualified for a scholarship before,” said Patterson. “Then one day I got a letter in the mail telling me about the award. It was perfect timing, because I was getting pretty burned out and thinking about taking a semester off, but this came as a huge encouragement. I just went ahead and signed up for three more classes!”

The General John W. Vessey Jr. Scholarship Fund was created with a generous gift from an insurance policy that Vessey held. The gift also qualified him to become a member of UMUC’s Heritage Society. For more information about this and other ways to make a difference, contact Institutional Advancement at 240-684-5121, e-mail giftplanning@umuc.edu, or visit www.umuc.edu/giftplanning.

**Vessey Scholarship recipient
Sharron Ortiz**



A straight-A student, the 2007 recipient of the Molly Pitcher Award for voluntary contributions to improving the military community, and the parent of a nine-year-old son, Patterson took on added responsibilities when she accepted a position as an underwriting service assistant with State Farm Insurance.

“I love my job,” said Patterson, “but I would go to work, come home, read my assigned chapter after my son went to bed, maybe work on a paper until midnight or 1 a.m., and then do it again the next day. It gets tiring after awhile, and receiving the scholarship was a great encouragement and motivation.”

Patterson added, “I would just like to say a big thank you to UMUC and to General Vessey. I am so happy to have received the scholarship. I’m sure it would have taken me longer to get my degree otherwise, and this was just such a huge motivator. Again, thank you so much!”

Sharron Ortiz

Sharron Ortiz, whose husband serves on active duty in the U.S. Air Force in Hawaii, echoed Patterson’s sentiments. A psychology major who plans to one day serve the military community and returning veterans as a psychiatric nurse, Ortiz has been paying for college piecemeal.

“It had gotten to the point that, unless I started getting some scholarships, I wasn’t going to be able to complete my degree,” said Ortiz. “But I honestly wasn’t expecting it. I had been turned down

for a Pell Grant—it’s funny, because we barely have enough money to get by, but we still don’t qualify because we earn too much—and I didn’t even realize I had qualified for a scholarship until I checked my account balance, and it was like, ‘Oh my God, I’ve been given a scholarship!’ I was thrilled.”

Ortiz, a Certified Nurse Assistant, also serves as key spouse for the squadron, helping support other spouses of deployed personnel. British by birth, she just received her U.S. citizenship this year and was especially touched to learn that the scholarship she earned came from a long-time member of the U.S. military.

“For me and my husband, who is also a UMUC student, becoming part of the military family changed our lives,” said Ortiz. “We would never be where we are now if not for the military, and it’s quite humbling to know that there are people out there who are so generous, and who are willing to help military spouses finish their education. I’m a year away from graduation, and I assure you I wouldn’t have been able to get this far without that scholarship. I’ve been working on this four-year degree for six years already, and that’s mostly because of finances. I was honestly thinking that I would have to put everything on hold again so that I could go back to work to earn some more money to pay for school.”

Asked what she would say if she had the opportunity to speak with Vessey in person, Ortiz didn’t hesitate.

“Thank you,” she said. “Thank you so much. You’ll never know how much your support means to all of us.” ❖

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FACULTY KUDOS

NORMAN C. ROTHMAN, who teaches history in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, posted the scholarly essay, "Wyoming Valley: An American Saga," to the UMUC Working Papers Series, accessible at chaucer.umuc.edu/wp. The study examines a region of Northeast Pennsylvania from a historical perspective, tracing the ideological, sociological, and technological evolution it has undergone through four major time periods: the Native American Eras, the Colonial and Early National Period, the Age of Coal, and the Post-Industrial Period.

RICHARD SCHUMAKER, associate collegiate professor in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies and manager of worldwide training in the university's Center for Teaching and Learning, chaired a panel discussion entitled "Quality Matters: Achieving Quality Through Collaboration" at the Maryland Distance Learning Association conference June 7–9, 2009, in Baltimore, Maryland. Panelists included administrators from the Penn State World Campus and Broward College, in Florida, who discussed their experiences

adapting the Quality Matters Rubric to their own institutions. The following day, Schumaker delivered a presentation, entitled "The Longest Journey: Transforming Your F2F Lectures into Compelling Online Courses," at the Defense Information School (DINFOS) located at Fort Meade, in Maryland. Schumaker currently serves as president of the Maryland Distance Learning Association. Schumaker has also been invited to serve on the International Program Committee for the International Association of Science and Technology for Development (IASTED) International Conference on Web-based Education, March 15–17, 2010, in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt.

JOSEPH ROBERT WHITE, adjunct associate professor of history in UMUC's School of Undergraduate Studies, gave a presentation via streaming video at the Center for Jewish History's Educational Program for Yiddish Culture (EPYC) Educators Seminar on June 24, 2009, in New York City.



JOHN NOLAN, who teaches history for UMUC Europe, conducted a special seminar, HIST 218/318G D-Day and the Normandy Campaign, for the U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command out of Mildenhall, England, which was deployed in support of ceremonies commemorating the 65th anniversary of D-Day. Twelve students enrolled in the seminar, which was held June 3–6, 2009, on their campground at Utah Beach and at other major D-Day sites. The students attended evening lectures, visited eight major museums and seven landing areas and battle sites, and had the opportunity to meet D-Day veterans who were present for the anniversary. UMUC worked closely with the unit's command so that class members could fulfill their duty schedule, which included participating in ceremonies at the German Military Cemetery, Utah Beach, and St. Mere Eglise, and parachuting into the original 82nd Airborne landing zones at la Friere. Here, Nolan (to the immediate left of the UMUC banner) stands with students at the German battery at Longues-sur-Mer, in Normandy, one of the better preserved German gun positions.

1990s **Thomas W. Spottswood '90**
 Gaithersburg, Maryland, holds Chartered Retirement Plan Specialist and Accredited Investment Fiduciary designations, and serves as a senior financial advisor and principal of RiverBay Investment Group in Gaithersburg. For five years, he has hosted the local cable television show *Money Matters*, which airs weekly and discusses investment and retirement planning topics with local professionals and business leaders.

Kae Dakin '91
 Washington, D.C., founded Kae Dakin Consulting (www.KaeDakinConsulting.com) after more than 20 years in nonprofit leadership, including serving as CEO of three organizations and, most recently, as vice president of institutional development for the global health council, where she built a diversified funding program and increased individual donations by 150 percent and corporation and foundation donations by 200 percent. In her new role, she serves as a strategic consultant and coach to CEOs, executives, and governing boards of nonprofits, associations, and NGOs, and specializes in solving problems that involve fund development and revenue generation, board development and strategic planning, and organizational management. She reports that her master's degree in nonprofit management from UMUC has been unbelievably valuable, and wrote, "Thank you, UMUC! I could not have done it without this education."

Stephen J. Walker '99
 Ellicott City, Maryland, published *A Whole New Ballgame: The 1969 Washington Senators* (Pocol Press, 2009), which lovingly recounts the glory days of baseball in Washington, D.C., when owner Bob Short coaxed batting legend and rookie manager Ted Williams out of retirement, and the typically ill-fated Senators—powered by the tape-measure home runs of "The Capital Punisher," Frank Howard—climbed steadily from the bottom of the standings and straight into the hearts of Washington baseball fans starved for a winner. Walker is a member of the Society for

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American Baseball Research (SABR), and his articles have appeared in national and regional SABR publications and the Washington Baseball Historical Society's quarterly newsletter. He writes a blog on Washington baseball at www.stephenjwalker.com. His book is available online from Amazon.com and direct from the publisher at www.pocolpress.com.

2000s **Robert A. Sawyer '05 & '06**
Acworth, Georgia, earned his associate's and bachelor's degrees from UMUC after about 10 years of part-time study, then went on to earn an MBA from

Colorado State University in May 2009. He wrote, "Immediately after graduation, I was accepted to the Haub School of Business at Saint Joseph's University and am currently pursuing an MS in business intelligence. I will graduate from this program in January 2011. Even though I did not pursue a college education in the traditional way, UMUC gave me a start. From a very proud active-duty Marine, thank you, UMUC, for giving me the opportunity to find my way."

Deanna McCray James '05 & '08
Burtonsville, Maryland, a member-at-large of the Board of Directors of UMUC's

Alumni Association, won the title of Mrs. District of Columbia American 2009 in a pageant held June 21, 2009. The victory qualifies her to compete for the title of Mrs. America 2010 in Tucson, Arizona, in September 2009 in a nationally televised event. The Mrs. America contest remains the first and foremost beauty pageant for married women in the country and is devoted to showcasing the beauty, poise, and intelligence of America's 70 million married women. James—a veteran of pageants, both as a contestant and organizer—and an earlier Mrs. Maryland winner, reported that, in her interviews, her discussion of UMUC and the

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opportunities it offers to adult learners was a hit with the judges.

Stephen P. Stahr '07

Grayslake, Illinois, managing director and chief operating officer of the Million Dollar Round Table, the premier association of financial professionals, recently won the 2009 John C. Thiel Distinguished Service Award from the Association Forum of Chicagoland. The award, which is named in honor of the Forum's chairman-elect, goes to unsung heroes who have demonstrated long-term, multifaceted leadership as a Forum volunteer. Stahr, who has served as a member and chair of several Forum committees and task forces, received the award during the association's annual black-tie honors gala. Proceeds from the gala, which drew more than 400 leading association executives from the Chicago area, went to support Inspiration Corporation, a Chicago nonprofit that provides social services to homeless and impoverished individuals.

Emma Garrison-Alexander '08

Bowie, Maryland, earned her Doctor of Management degree from UMUC and, in June 2009, was named assistant administrator and chief information officer for the Office of Information Technology in the Transportation and Security Administration (TSA). In that capacity, she leads an office—with a budget of almost \$400 million—that plans, organizes, provides, implements, and maintains a full integrated, certified, accredited, and modern IT infrastructure. She is also responsible for developing and managing central policies and procedures for all of TSA's IT requirements. Most recently, Garrison-Alexander served as deputy for counterterrorism for Signals Intelligence, Development, at the National Security Agency (NSA), where she worked for more than 20 years.

Charles Howard Parker '08

Charlotte, North Carolina, graduated in June 2009 from Thomas Edison State College, in Trenton, New Jersey, with a Master of Science in human resource management. He has since applied and been accepted to UMUC's Doctor of Management program, beginning studies in the fall. ❖

NEWS AND UPDATES continued from page 5

implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of a veterans service model that will integrate comprehensive academic services into a Web-based platform. The goal of the new system will be to make it easier for veterans to make the transition into higher education, and ultimately to increase retention, student satisfaction and degree completion rates.

At UMUC, the grant will fund the development, implementation, and evaluation of two online courses that will help veterans transition into higher education. The first course will assess the students' readiness for the online classroom. A second course will focus on university services and strategies designed to improve student success, satisfaction, and degree completion rates. The grant will also help fund efforts to inform potential students about UMUC's veteran services and support.

The grant awarded to UMUC is part of ACE's initiative—Serving Those Who Serve: Higher Education and America's Veterans—which was designed to promote access to and success in higher education for more than 2 million servicemembers and their families who are eligible for benefits under the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008.

More than 250 institutions applied for the grant, which was reviewed by a selection committee of higher education leaders, program directors, and veterans. Criteria for the grant included, sustainability and quality of existing programs, initiatives, and strategies for best practices.

UMUC JOINS YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM, EARMARKS \$1.8 MILLION

BY UMUC PUBLIC RELATIONS

UMUC earmarked \$1.8 million to fund participation in the Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program, a provision of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. Under the agreement with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), UMUC joined a prestigious list

of colleges and universities that have agreed to fund tuition overruns for eligible veterans who enroll in programs that cost more than the highest public in-state undergraduate tuition rate allowed under the Post 9/11 GI Bill. UMUC can contribute up to 50 percent of student expenses that exceed the allowable rate, and the VA will match the contribution.

"Given UMUC's 60-year commitment to serving military students, it is a natural extension of that commitment to participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program, which will allow us to better serve our military students," said UMUC President Susan C. Aldridge. "Financial crises have impacted students worldwide, and UMUC is proud to be able to play an instrumental role in helping military students get one step closer to earning a degree after selflessly serving our country."

Schools that participate in the Yellow Ribbon Program will establish application procedures for eligible students, determine the maximum number of students who may participate in the program, and decide the percentage of tuition to contribute. UMUC has earmarked up to \$615 each for up to 3,000 students each academic year. That contribution will then be matched by the VA.

The program is designed so that an out-of-state undergraduate student can take up to 30 credits in an academic year and incur no out-of-pocket expenses for tuition and fees. UMUC will also contribute \$615 for out-of-state graduate students, per academic year, for six academic hours.

To be eligible for the maximum benefit rate under the Yellow Ribbon Program, students must have served an aggregate period of active duty after September 11, 2001, of at least 36 months, have been honorably discharged from active duty for a service connected disability, and have served 30 continuous days after September 11, 2001, or be a dependent eligible for Transfer of Entitlement under the Post-9/11 GI Bill based on a veteran's service under the eligibility criteria. ❖

Building a Legacy

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THE CAMPAIGN FOR UMUC

Opening more doors at UMUC

For many UMUC students, a scholarship has made the difference between being able to enroll for a degree program and having to postpone or even abandon their education dreams. As UMUC business administration student Isadoro Linares put it, "The scholarship was my door to a room full of hope."

Scholarships are probably the first thing most of us think of when we hear about "Building a Legacy of Educational Opportunities," the Campaign for UMUC. Funds from the campaign will certainly be used to give more students an opportunity to enroll in a UMUC program. But the success of the campaign will also touch every student—whether on scholarship or not—as well as faculty and alumni, too.

Much more becomes possible as new doors are opened by the campaign. New degree and certificate programs will be developed in critical fields of study. New academic chairs will be endowed, bringing world-renowned experts to the UMUC faculty. The UMUC arts program will flourish, and construction of the new Leroy Merritt Center for the Art of Joseph Sheppard will be completed. Symposiums and meetings will attract national and international government, business, and scientific leaders to UMUC, enhancing the university's reputation and providing many new opportunities for students, alumni, and faculty alike.

When you stop to think about your own experience at UMUC, keep in mind that many of the benefits you enjoyed were the result of past campaigns, much like the one that is currently under way. And today's campaign



"Join me in giving back to our alma mater by making a financial contribution to support the Campaign for UMUC today!"

NATHANIEL "NAT" ALSTON '77
PRESIDENT
UMUC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

"Everybody is college material; you just have to believe in yourself."

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is a way to build on the value of your own experience while ensuring that many more deserving students will be able to benefit from a UMUC education program in the future.

Your tax-deductible contribution can make a real difference for your university. To learn how you can support the Campaign for UMUC, call 800-888-UMUC (8682), ext. 5100, or visit www.umuc.edu/legacy.

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Did you attend the Munich Campus? Share your memories!

In the upcoming issue of *Achiever*, we will highlight the history of UMUC's Munich Campus and explore the impact its alumni are making today—in their own communities and in the lives of other UMUC students.

If you have a story to tell, e-mail Cathy Sweet-Windham, UMUC's vice president of Institutional Advancement, at csweet-windham@umuc.edu.

